Applying Guided Reading Strategies in the Content Areas

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**August, 2012**



**Reading in the Content Areas**

**Questions to Ask Yourself as you Develop Supports for Readers in the Content Areas:**

* What do I expect students to learn as they read this text and how will I let the students know this expectation?
* What background information, experience or knowledge will students need in order to successfully read and make sense of this text (Making Connections)?
* How will I build, provide or activate this background?
* What challenges will my students encounter with this text and how will I alert them to strategies to cope with this text? For example: concepts, vocabulary, complex charts or graphs, complex sentence structure.
* When students' prior knowledge, understanding and interest have been activated, how will I identify any major conceptual or information gaps they have and which need to be addressed prior to reading? Is there a vital concept, piece of information or word definition which they need in order for the text to "make sense?
* How may I group students who are better readers to help their fellow students as they read?
* What explicit teaching or guidance in the use of the text features might students require so that they can be increasingly independent readers in my subject area?

**The Six Big Reading Comprehension Strategies**

There are 6 Extending Comprehension Strategies. These 6 broad strategies are used to extend comprehension as students read print, text books, video, web and database materials, CD ROM's and other resource formats.

* Visualizing
* Making Connections
* Questioning
* Inferring
* Determining Importance
* Synthesizing

**Making Connections/Schema**

Students connect their background knowledge to the text they are reading.

**Purpose of the strategy:**

Readers comprehend better when they actively think about and apply their knowledge of the book's topic, their own experiences, and the world around them. Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis in their book, Strategies that Work (2000, p. 68), state that, "When children understand how to connect the text they read to their lives, they begin to make connections between what they read and the larger world. This nudges them into thinking about bigger, more expansive issues beyond their universe of home, school, and neighborhood."

**How to help your student use this strategy:**

To help your student make connections while they are reading, ask him/her the following questions:

* What does the book remind you of?
* What do you know about the book's topic?
* Does this book remind you of another book?

**Visualizing**

Students create mind pictures and visualizations when they read.

**Purpose of the strategy:**

The reader uses the text material and their own prior knowledge to create their own mind pictures of what is happening in the text. "Visualizing personalizes reading, keeps us engaged, and often prevents us from abandoning a book.” (Strategies that Work, 2000, p.97).

**How to help your student use this strategy:**

To help you student visualize while reading, try the following:

* share wordless picture books with your student - have your student tell the story
* make frequent stops while reading aloud to describe the pictures in your minds
* after reading time have your child draw what they see in their mind

**Questioning**

With questioning, students understand the text on a deeper level because questions clarify confusion and stimulate further interest in a topic.

**Purpose of the strategy:**

Through questioning, students are able to wonder about content and concepts before, during, and after reading by:

* constructing meaning
* enhancing meaning
* finding answers
* solving problems
* finding specific information
* acquiring a body of information
* discovering new information
* propelling research efforts
* clarifying confusion  
  (Strategies that Work, 2000, p.22)

**How to help your student use this strategy:**

* model questioning in your own rereading
* ask "I wonder" questions (open-ended)
* ask your students to come up with questions before reading to see if it's answered in the text
* keep track of questions verbally or in an informal question log
* stop and predict what will happen next
* discuss what questions you still have after reading

**Inferring**

* Students make inferences about text they are reading to interpret meaning and develop deeper understanding.

**Purpose of the strategy:**

* Readers comprehend better when they make connections and construct their own knowledge (using prior experiences, visualizing, predicting and synthesizing) to interpret the "big idea.” It is like a mental dialogue between the author and the student.

**How to help your students use this strategy:**

* Ask them:
* "How did you know that?"
* "Why did you think that would happen?"
* "Look at the cover and pictures, then make predictions."
* "Discuss the plot and theme."
* "What do you think this story was about?"
* "How do you think the character feels?"
* "Does it remind you of anything?"

**Determining Importance, Digging For Meaning**

When students are reading nonfiction, they have to decide and remember what is important from the material they read.

**Purpose of the strategy:**

The purpose is to teach students to discriminate the "must know" information from the less important details in a text. "When kids read and understand nonfiction, they build background for the topic and acquire new knowledge. The ability to identify essential ideas and salient information is a prerequisite to developing insight.” (Strategies that Work, 2000, p. 119).

**How to help your student use this strategy:**

To help you students determine importance while they are reading:

* Initiate discussion before reading by asking what your students know about the topic and what they would like to learn.
* After reading, discuss what important information they have learned.
* While reading, help your students look for clues in the text to determine importance.  
  Pay attention to:
  + first and last lines of a paragraph
  + titles
  + headings
  + captions
  + framed text
  + fonts
  + illustrations
  + italics
  + bold faced print

**Synthesizing**

Students weave together what they read and their own ideas into new complete thoughts.

**Purpose of the strategy:**

Readers comprehend better when they sift through information to make sense of it and to act upon it - such as judging or evaluating the author's purpose to form a new idea, opinion, or perspective. This is the highest and most complex form of comprehension.

**How to help your student use this strategy:**

* Use questioning strategies such as, "How has your thinking changed from reading that piece?"
* Discuss current events with an emphasis on judgments and opinions.
* Ask questions with no clear answers.

**Guided Reading in the Content Areas**

**Key Ideas:**

GR is not about the program, but rather the development of strategies that enable students to read for meaning at all times

GR is not just for ELA … it can be used in any subject area, with any text

**The Ultimate Goal of Guided Reading in Any Discipline:**

* “To develop independent readers who question, consider alternatives, and make informed choices as they seek meaning.” - Margaret Mooney
* To develop strategic, independent readers
* To build reading confidence and competence
* To ensure that students learn something:
  + from the text
  + about becoming a better reader!

**The Guided Reading Lesson: (see attached Lesson Plan)**

* **Deciding who will participate:**
  + Traditionally for 4-6 students able to read similar level text with support
  + The same approach can be used for large group instruction as well, with the focus on tiering the strategy/activity to ensure success for all students
* **Start with a strategy** 
  + Focus on one strategy at a time

**Don’t forget about …**



**DI!**

* + Practice that strategy over several lessons
  + Research says that a strategy has to be used up to seven times to become automatic!
* **Choose the text**
  + Make sure your text matches the strategy you have chosen or vice versa:
    - Major integrated resources – text/CD/DVD
    - E-texts
    - Scanned articles
    - Document camera on the SMART Board Tumblebooks:
    - Wheatland Regional Library – E-Library Services – Kids Page – Tumblebooks
      * <http://www.tumblebooks.com/library/asp/home_tumblebooks.asp>
  + Determine the reading level of the text, taking into consideration:
    - Students’ background knowledge and vocabulary base
    - Students’ reading level
    - Support you will have to give students (employ DI strategies to ensure success of all students)
* **Plan for B-D-A activities:** 
  + **Before reading** - text introduction to establish context:
    - Activate prior knowledge
    - Present title, author, and publication information if appropriate
    - Give a summary statement of the text

**Don’t forget about …**



**DI!**

* + - Guide students to make connections
    - Set a purpose for reading
    - Invite predictions
    - Preview the text to introduce new/key vocabulary and concepts
  + **During reading** – scaffolding students as they read:
    - Skimming and scanning for information
    - Using vocabulary cues to meaning
    - Distinguishing key information from supporting detail
    - Using conventions of informational text to support comprehension
    - Predicting and confirming
    - Self-questioning
  + **After reading** – revisiting the text to reinforce strategy use and extend learning:
    - Review focus strategy and talk about how it worked/it’s advantages
    - Guided discussion is a key element of GR
    - Questions to promote higher level thinking
    - Educationally sound extension activities:
      * Written responses – graphic organizers, response journals, etc.
      * Role drama, reader’s theatre, visual art, further research

**So… What Do You Do With the Rest?**

If you choose to do GR with small groups in your classroom, the rest of the students have to be engaged in working independently on skill/topic-related activities while you are working with the GR group**.**

Some possible suggestions are:

* Independent reading
* Response journals
* Shared reading responses
* Research project
* Book/Article/Topic club
* Graphic organizers
* Strategy activities

Any, or all, of the above activities could be done with the use of centres in your classroom. Refer to the wiki to find the following for further ideas:

* Literacy Centres in the Guided Reading Classroom
* What Do You Do With the Rest?
* Both are on the “Resources and Websites” – “Guided Reading” Support section

**Resources – all on the wiki**

**Wiki:**

* <http://readingstrategiesthatwork.wikispaces.com/>

**Handbooks/Handouts:**

* Applying Guided Reading Strategies in the Content Areas (this handout)
* Sun West Reading in the Content Areas
* Reading Strategies that Work
* Mosaic of Reading Strategies
* Literacy Centres in the Guided Reading Classroom
* Helping Students Succeed – Summarizing, Reading to find information, Skimming, Scanning, Finding the Main Idea
* Summarizing Strategies
* What Do You Do With the Rest?
* ABC’s of Differentiated Instruction – Strategies and Activities

**Websites:**

* <http://busyteacher.org/>
* <http://www.busyteacherscafe.com/>
* [www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/index.html](http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/index.html)
* [http://www.ohiorc.org/literacy\_k5/strategy/](http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/index.html)
* [http://www.jmeacham.com/readers.workshop/readers.workshop.mini.lessons.htm](http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/index.html)

**Books:**

* **Strategies that Work** – Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis
* **Reading with Meaning** – Debbie Miller
* **Guided Reading Basics** – Lori Jamison Rog
* **Guiding Readers** (Making the Most of the 18-minute Guided Reading Lesson) – Lori Jamison Rog
* **Reality Checks** (Teaching Reading Comprehension with Non-Fiction K-5) – Tony Stead

**Flip Snack:**

This handout can be viewed/shared at: <http://snack.to/fuplwkn1>

**A Guided Reading Lesson Plan**

Title, Author and Publication Information: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Level: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Genre: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Strategy Focus:



Before Reading:

Key Vocabulary/Concepts

Connections:

Summary Statement:

Preview:

I wonder …

Discussion Points:



DI Strategies to meet individual needs

Creative Response or Extension Activity: